

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 37 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 14, 16, 17, 21, 26, 27, 28, 31, 33 and 36 have been amended. The applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Response is fully responsive to the Office Action dated December 14, 1999.

Allowable Claimed Subject Matters:

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication in the Office Action that claims 1-37 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the Examiner's claim objections as well as the Examiner's indefiniteness rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Accordingly, as discussed below, claims 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 14, 16, 17, 21, 26, 27, 28, 31, 33 and 36 have been amended to overcome the Examiner's claim objections as well as the Examiner's indefiniteness rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, thereby placing the application in immediate condition for allowance.

Claims Objections:

In items 3 - 14, pages 2 - 5, of the Office Action, claims 1 - 37 are objected to due to certain informalities which the Examiner deemed needed correction.

This objection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claims , 2, 3, 5, 6, 14, 16, 17, 21, 26, 27, 28, 31, 33 and 36 obviates the objection of claims 1-37. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection of claims 1 - 37 is respectfully solicited

35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph, Rejection:

In items 16 -21, pages 5 - 7, of the Office Action, claims 2, 21, 27, 31 and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claims 2, 21, 27, 31 and 36 obviates the rejection of claims 2, 21, 27, 31 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2, 21, 27, 31 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is respectfully solicited.

Thus, it is respectfully asserted that all of the remaining pending claims 1 - 37 are now in condition for allowable over the prior art of record. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner allow these claims, along with the entire application, to issue.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the

Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN, HATTORI,
McLELAND & NAUGHTON

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TEB', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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